

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the provisions of S. Res. 27, there will now be up to 4 hours of debate on the motion, equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, with no motions, points of order, or amendments in order.

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

TRIBUTE TO ZAILA AVANT-GARDE

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, I am here to talk about two things.

First, let me give a heartfelt congratulations to Zaila Avant-garde, this incredible—if we can get the poster up—14-year-old young lady, who just won the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

She is Louisiana's first winner and is the first African-American winner of this spelling bee. She dominated, getting words that I don't think any of the rest of us would have been able to spell.

By the way, I should also note that she holds a Guinness World Record for dribbling. I am told there is a YouTube video of her dribbling and, at the same time, juggling basketballs that is incredible to watch.

She has a bright future. Zaila shows that hard work and dedication bring success.

This week, Senator JOHN KENNEDY and I introduced a resolution congratulating Zaila. And Zaila, if you are watching, if you want to do it, when you are a little bit older and you want to do an internship in a Senate office in the U.S. Senate, please give me a call. Believe me, I will remember you.

And if you wish to do that internship, we are here to encourage you as you embark on the rest of your life, a life that is going to be incredibly successful.

ENERGY POLICY

Madam President, we have to talk about the White House's hypocritical and backward energy policy that is putting a target on American workers.

The Biden administration is happy to cancel U.S. pipelines and kill the jobs pipelines create, putting people in Louisiana and elsewhere in the Nation out of business, justifying it by saying this is how we lower greenhouse gas emissions. Yet they then greenlight a Russian pipeline into Germany when the emissions that come from Russian gas far exceed the emission profile of gas that is produced in Louisiana or elsewhere in our country. By the way, it also creates Russian jobs while simultaneously we are killing American jobs.

Then let's look at gas prices, which are now much higher than they were. The Biden administration is working to put a pause on oil and gas production in the Gulf of Mexico, but they are pleading with OPEC to increase OPEC production, saying we need more oil shipped to the United States to lower gas prices.

Just last week, the President's Press Secretary said the administration is encouraging OPEC countries to reach agreements to increase production

while they are simultaneously stymieing U.S. production and the U.S. jobs that go along with the production of U.S. oil and gas.

And it just begs the question: The administration is helping Russians and the Russian economy; they are helping OPEC nations and workers in OPEC; why don't we think about helping American workers? It just cannot be understood.

I am demanding; we are demanding; we are pleading not with OPEC but with the administration to leave our jobs and the livelihoods of Louisiana workers and American workers alone.

Let's just speak about the Louisiana industry. The oil and gas industry in Louisiana is a major economic and industrial force, a force for good, and the benefits from the environmental perspective must be stated. The United States is a global leader in decreasing greenhouse gas emissions, and this happened because of increased production of U.S. natural gas. We simultaneously became a net exporter of energy, helping other nations lower their emission profile as well. But what we have seen in the last few months, you would not understand that.

As I mentioned earlier, President Biden canceled the Keystone XL Pipeline and 11,000 jobs with it, but, again, Russian pipelines are OK. The administration removed sanctions from Russia, clearing the way for the construction of the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline—cementing, by the way, Europe's reliance upon Russian gas. Again, Russian gas, the production of it, emits far more greenhouse gas emissions than the production of American and Louisiana natural gas.

It is almost, if you will, a quadruple whammy: weakening U.S. security, increasing global greenhouse gas emissions, increasing gas prices, and killing American jobs. That is what this administration's policies have been doing. It begs the question: Why don't we green-light U.S. pipelines as opposed to green-lighting Russian pipelines?

Americans across the country, every time they fill up their tanks, feel these punches, and they are tired of it. The average price of gasoline has now been over \$3 a gallon since May, clocking in at \$3.15 as of today, and it is only going up—expected that gas prices will rise another 10 to 20 cents through the end of August. Louisiana is a bit luckier. Because of our position as an energy powerhouse, the gas prices here at home are still averaging about \$2.75—not going down anytime soon.

While the administration is actively trying to kill domestic energy jobs, they are working to increase production of oil overseas—again, asking the OPEC cartel to increase production so there is more oil to lower gas prices. Why don't we just produce more oil in the United States of America?

The administration says that they are killing jobs in the United States because of carbon emissions, but when

you produce oil and gas in the Gulf of Mexico and you bring it to our shores, it has the lowest emissions profile of any oil and gas that we use in our country. You almost have to ask, what is it about the U.S. oil and gas worker that the administration doesn't like?

In 2019—just speaking about Louisiana—in 2019, oil and gas operations supported nearly 250,000 Louisiana jobs, about 1 out of every 9 jobs in my State. The oil and gas industry provided \$73 billion to the State's gross domestic product, more than a quarter. Through taxes alone, it accounted for \$4.5 billion going directly to coastal restoration, environmental improvement projects, schools, infrastructures, roads—you name it—making life better for the citizens of my State.

It has been only 6 months of the Biden administration, but every day, that target on the back of an oil and gas worker and on their family's future gets bigger and bigger and bigger.

One more time, let me say in conclusion, the Biden administration's working against U.S. oil and gas production is making other countries stronger; it is making us weaker. It weakens America's security, it increases global greenhouse gas emissions, it increases gas prices, and it kills jobs. We need better policy for our country, for my State, and for our workers.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

CUBA

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I would like to speak about a topic I spoke about before, and that is our policy toward Cuba. I couldn't help but think, as I look at the Cubans protesting in the street, especially as I see so many people in the streets in places where both my wife Marcelle and I have walked, and actually our granddaughter Sophia, where we know a number of the people there, and we see them protesting, it hits twice as hard. They are demanding greater freedom and economic opportunity. This illustrates a widespread hardship and hunger and the need for fundamental change in Cuba.

Human rights are universal. Cuban people are no different from people anywhere in the world. They want to be able to speak freely. They don't want fear of retribution.

We have been told that the Biden administration is conducting a review of the Trump administration's policy. It is the Trump administration's policy toward Cuba which is now in effect. There is nothing unusual about that review. New administrations regularly conduct such reviews. But it is now mid-July, and the key question that needs to be answered is not very complicated.

It is axiomatic that we have profound disagreements with the Cuban Government. They have held power since 1959. They have held power by outlawing opposition political parties. Dissent is often punished with physical abuse and